2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FF7 Yao FF7

TABLE IV

Origin of Village which have moved in the Kwenga-Livunde Area since the Wars Commenced and are still there

Origin	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Total
Northern Area:							
Port Johnston	—	—	—	6	—	1	7
Mlanda	—	3	—	1	1	2	7
Total	1	—	10	4	1	3	19
Southern Area:							
Mahomba and Namwanga	—	—	—	1	7	35	43
Livunde	—	—	—	4	7	1	12
South of Livunde	—	—	—	1	1	3	5
Other Mwenibuli Area:							
Port E. Africa	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Unmarked	73	36	111	37	6	30	283
	—	—	—	1	1	31	34
Total	74	39	121	56	24	106	421

Africa. We have no record of how many villages have been lost to the Southern or Northern area from Kwenga-Livunde area, so that we cannot evaluate the significance of the loss of 64 villages from Southern area, and of only 11 from the Northern area. The density of population in Mahomba's area is 168 per square mile, and the average density of the Shire Highlands is about 150. It may well be that there is now a movement out of the Shire Highlands into the low density populated Livunde-Kwenga area.

The Principle of Primacy

Migration and invasion have been the keynote of Machinga history; village headmen recount with pride how their ancestors moved into Nyanjaland with their bands of slaves and followers. "The East" is the traditional home of the Yao and even young men who have never been there proudly say, "We come from the East". This sentiment is reflected in the belief that the rains from the east are beneficial and give rise to good crops, while the rains from the west are detrimental and cause

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crop failures. Also I was told that important village headmen are buried with their heads pointing to the east.

The Yao concept of the past is reflected in the principles of political organization of these Machinga chiefdoms. The invasion is the datum point from which rank mainly stems. We may classify modern headmen into: those who were in the area before the Yao invasion, i.e. the Aborigines; the invaders; and those who have come in since the invasion and have had to submit themselves to the Machinga chief, i.e. the Newcomers. The principle behind this classification of headmen is fundamental to Yao political structure. Stated most simply it is the rule that MacDonald quoted in describing the development of local organization: 'However large the settlement may become the man that is first in is the chief or headman.'[1] This is, of course, somewhat of a simplification, but the rule contains the essence of the principle. It was reversed for the Aboriginal Nyanja because the Yao subjugated them. But the claims of the Nyanja chiefs to rank because they had occupied the land first were recognized by the Yao who absorbed them into the social structure in positions of high rank.

But the principle holds among the Yao themselves, and for the Ngoni in their movements after the White conquest. The operation of the principle is clearest in the structure of small local areas such as Chiwale's. When Chiwale's area was first settled, just after World War I, there were large tracts of unoccupied land. The first headmen to move into this region were Cigwaja, Kapalowa, Nyanja, Makata and Mumbwa. The local chief Chiwale followed Cigwaja, but as Cigwaja was one of the broader headmen under Chiwale during the period of invasion, he now recognized Chiwale as the chief. The area that is now Chiwale's chiefdom was divided out among these five headmen. As other headmen came into the area they had to approach one of these five for land rights. These, when granted, were granted irrevocably in a block to the new village headman who then had sole rights to distribute the land afterwards. If he had the land to spare, he may have granted a portion of it to yet another village headman, and this action was also irrevocable. The land occupation pattern in any particular area is therefore extremely complex, because in addition to the village garden areas, indivi-

[1] MacDonald, *Africana*, i, 147. See p. 33 above.

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II. THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE BEFORE THE WHITE CONTACT.

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It is difficult to picture what the political organization of the Tne was like before the Whites came into the area, but informants—especially the old men—do describe the conditions that existed in the early days, and in addition to this, there are some useful reports in Duff Macdonald's book[1] which was written before European influence was strongly felt.

Informants describe the movements of the Tne into Nyandand in terms of small family groups under the leadership of a male matrilineal relative.[2] These leaders bear the same names as certain of the village headmen to-day, and the present village headmen claim to be their matrilineal descendants. Among the kin-group leaders were such outstanding personalities as Kwenga, Livenade and Nkata.[3] These men were military and commercial leaders and much of their prestige derived from their prowess in trade and war, pursuits which in those days were intimately interdependent. People nowadays describe the chiefs as possessing many slaves, guns and gunpowder and having great "strength". In the history of the chiefs Nkata, Livenade and Kwenga the pattern of conquest is similar. A group of village headmen under each chief moved into Nyandand to settle either by treaty as Nkata who settled with a clan relative among the indigenous Nyanja, or by direct conquest as Kwenga. After settling down they started sending out forces to subdue local chiefs until the boundary of the territory of some other powerful chief, usually another Tne, was reached. When this happened a definite territory was agreed upon by the two chiefs. Within this territory the population was increased by immigration from other areas or by slavery. Village headmen moved from a low to a more powerful chief because of the security he offered them. They were said to "seize the leg"

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II. THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE BEFORE THE WHITES CAME

173 648 167 (*Sukumela lekunyaki*), i.e. to surrender to the chief in the area. Also the chief sent out expeditions to capture slaves or he purchased slaves with the cloth and beads he had exchanged for ivory at the East coast.

643 921 Within his territory certain privileges and rights were held by the chief and he had certain religious duties to perform in which the unity of the people in the territory was expressed. In general the chief had rights over any ivory either found or hunted in his territory. If a dead elephant were found the tusks belonged to the chief, though he usually rewarded the finder with cloth. If a man killed an elephant the tusk that lay on the ground belonged to the chief while the other belonged to the killer. The killer's tusk was included in the chief's revenue to the court and its value paid in cloth to the killer when the revenue [illegible] [371] was assessed.

643 651 The chief was also entitled to an annual tribute of food and beer from all villages in his area, but this was used to entertain visitors who came to the court-village.

648 782 The chief's religious duties lay mainly in propitiating the spirits of his ancestors on occasions when the community at large, in contrast to the chief's own private affairs, was either threatened or directly affected. The most obvious occasion was immediately before the rains came when flour was poured on the two shrines and the spirits of the ancestors asked for good rains. Later when the rains were over a similar sacrifice was made asking for a good harvest. Sacrifices to the ancestors were also made on two other public occasions. They were made when some calamity had occurred or was believed to be impending. A run of unsuccessful campaigns induced Cingwakapoulo, a son of the Tau chief Mpoulo near Fort Johnston, to ask his father's father's brother to make sacri-

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